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THE KADOTA FIG

PART I.

The Market for Preserved Kadota Figs. A Summary of Six Years' Development of the Preserved Fig Industry in California.

Shipping of Fresh Kadota Figs
to the Eastern Market.

Kadota Figs
Dried.

U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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THE BECKWITH COMPANY

Growers, Preservers, Shippers of Kadota Figs
Reedley, California

November 1, 1922

THE MARKET FOR PRESERVED KADOTA FIGS

Every one likes preserved Kadota Figs. There is now a faster growing market for them than for any other canned or preserved fruit. It will take an immense quantity of them to supply this market, and this presents a real opportunity for the person who will plant a Kadota Fig orchard now.

The above assertion is made after six years spent in intensive development of the market for Kadota Figs. This revision of bulletins 1, 2 and 3 which we published two years ago is principally a re-emphasis of the statements made at that time. In other words, what we said then is after four years of pioneering fully borne out by the rapid development that has taken place since.

During these six years the volume of preserved Kadota Figs has steadily increased but the demand for them has grown very much faster than the supply of fruit. This insistent demand comes from a small number of people who have eaten these figs and become acquainted with them. There are literally millions of prospective buyers who have never tasted a preserved Kadota Fig, and the greatest possible production from the less than 3000 acres so far planted, will still leave most of them without a taste.

We have been handling the bulk of the Kadota Fig crop since Kadotas were first developed. This season our entire pack of BECKWITH Figs representing two thirds of the total Kadota Fig production was sold before August 25th, and since then orders for many thousands of additional cases have been declined simply because there were not enough Kadota Figs.

With the industry now on a substantial basis and with a widely increasing market, it is very evident that we must have a proportionate increase in the supply of fruit. Figures will probably convey to the mind much more clearly than words the need for a larger Kadota Fig production. For instance:

The acreage in raisin grapes is around 490,000 acres, while the acreage in Kadota Figs is less than 3,000 acres.

Cal. Canned Peaches amount annually to 5,000,000 cases, while the pack of Kadota Figs is about 20,000 cases.

Kadota Figs are headed for the million case class. That many cases will only give one can in one year to each of the twenty-five million purchasing households in the United States. Suppose that ninety per cent of these buyers like the goods and begin to buy them three or four times a year, or once a month, or once a week, where are the Kadota Figs coming from?

That Kadotas are not merely a luxury for the fancy trade is proved by their use as a staple fruit in a number of cafeterias. About one half of the Beckwith pack goes to a small group of cafeterias that are at present serving more preserved Kadota Figs than almost any other fruit. One of our largest customers now operating in Chicago ordered 2000 cases of BECKWITH preserved Kadota Figs

this season (50 tons) to serve over their counters at 15c a dish. Dozens of such firms will buy as much just as soon as we can supply them.

Here then is the grower's opportunity. The present limited acreage in Kadotas will not go far toward supplying this market. 40,000 to 50,000 acres are needed to support the industry and it is to be hoped all prospective planters in favored localities will realize this.

SUMMARY OF SIX YEARS' DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESERVED FIG INDUSTRY IN CALIFORNIA

Figs have been preserved in Texas and the Southern States for thirty years or more. But while there is a ready market for the product, weather conditions are so severe that the trees freeze back badly and no large development of the industry in that section of the country seems possible.

Figs have also been included in packs of California preserved fruit for a long time. But until the Kadota was developed there was no variety which made a really successful pack.

The preserving of figs as a distinct and separate California industry was begun in 1917 when the first exclusive pack of preserved Kadota Figs was put out under the BECKWITH label. The BECKWITH pack has grown from 3½ tons in 1917, to 15 tons in 1918, 32 tons in 1919, 52 tons in 1920, 76 tons in 1921, and over 150 tons of fresh Kadota Figs in 1922.

Naturally the success of the Kadota Fig under the Beckwith label has attracted the attention of other packers of fruit. In 1920, the California Peach and Fig Growers started to can and preserve figs and now many of the canners and preservers all over the state are in the market for all the Kadota Figs that they can buy. This assures the Kadota grower, almost anywhere, of a market for his figs.

The supply of Kadota Figs is, however, very limited, and on this account other varieties are being used by some packers. We think this will last only until there is a sufficient production of Kadota Figs. The Beckwith pack is made up of Kadota Figs only.

During the comparatively short space of time which they have been on the market, BECKWITH FIGS have become known from coast to coast as the finest product in preserved fruit. They are served in the highest class hotels, on the diners of 17 railway systems of the United States and Canada in individual service jars, and are sold in three styles of retail packages by the fancy grocery trade in most of our larger cities. But while the reputation of our Kadota Figs has been made through their sale to the fancy trade, it is an important fact that our biggest sales are now to cafeterias and popular price eating houses where they stand among the first two or three fruits most popular with the average consumer.

With a reputation among the fancy trade not excelled by any other fruit, and an established volume of sale to many popular price restaurants where it has become a staple fruit, it requires but little imagination to see that the

Kadota Fig as a preserved and canned fruit has a very big future.

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY—SHIPPING FRESH KADOTA FIGS

It has been thoroughly demonstrated that fresh Kadota Figs have the keeping qualities for long distance shipment in ordinary refrigerator cars. During 1917, '18, '19 and '20, the Beckwith Company made 52 separate shipments of fresh Kadota Figs to the eastern market, and these sold in New York, Boston, and other eastern points as far as Montreal, Canada, at prices which averaged over 15 cents per pound net.

These shipments were all made in the braces of ordinary refrigerator cars of grapes. Although some of these shipments were en route for more than thirty days, and there was some spoilage, most of the shipments arrived in fine shape.

The demand for our preserved figs has grown so rapidly that we have not felt justified in making any shipments of fresh Kadota Figs during the last two years. But our experience covering four years of experimental shipping proved conclusively to us that there is the opportunity for a large industry in shipping fresh Kadota Figs to the eastern market.

KADOTA FIGS DRIED

Kadota Figs dried make a heavy crop of 100% good figs—no splits, sours, smuts. It is possible to caprify the first part of the second crop if desired, and when caprified they make a dried fig that is very similar to the Calimyrna. The average dried Kadota Fig may not be as fancy as a perfect Calimyrna, but every one is a good, wholesome, edible fig. It should be remembered, too, that Kadotas produce 50 to 100% more tonnage than Calimyrnas.

We believe that in competition with Calimyrnas and Adriatics, dried Kadotas would come out ahead in actual net returns to the grower on account of the heavy production and the fact that there are no losses from splits, sours or smuts.

However, our mention of the Kadota as a dried fig is purely incidental, and is only given for the sake of information. The demand for the preserved fresh Kadota Fig is so thoroughly established that there will be few Kadotas for any other purpose for many years to come.